

Comp 590-184: Hardware Security and Side-Channels

Lecture 22: Hardware Bugs and Fuzzing

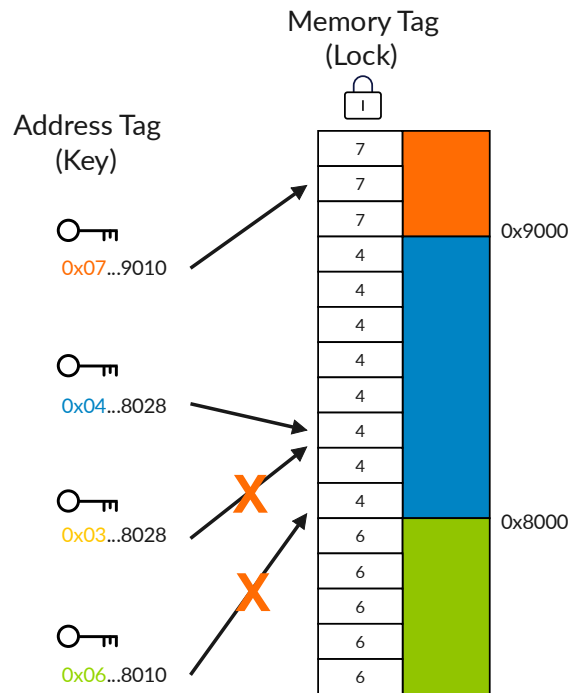
April 21, 2026
Andrew Kwong



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

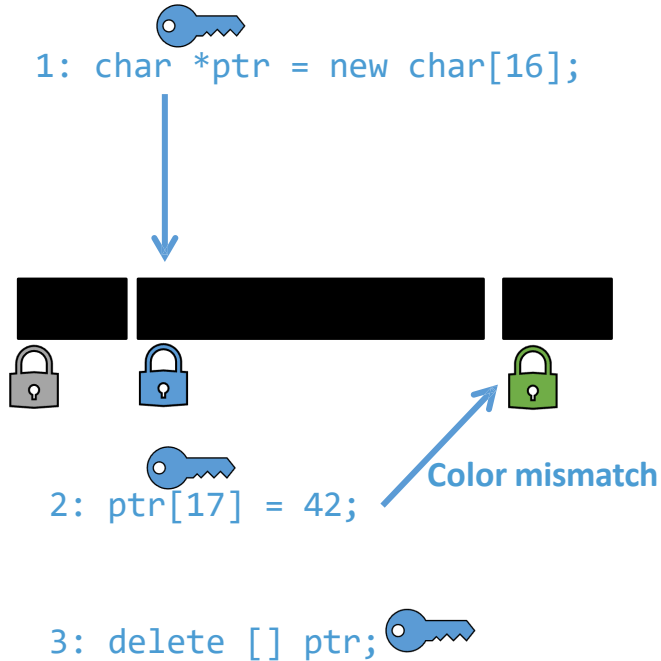
Slides adapted from Mengjia
Yan (shd.mit.edu)

ARM MTE (Memory Tagging Extension)



- The concept of keys and locks
- Memory locations are tagged by adding **four bits** of metadata to each **16 bytes** of physical memory

ARM MTE (Memory Tagging Extension)



- The concept of keys and locks
- Memory locations are tagged by adding **four bits** of metadata to each **16 bytes** of physical memory

ARM MTE (Memory Tagging Extension)



```
1: char *ptr = new char[16];
```



```
2: ptr[17] = 42;
```

```
3: delete [] ptr;
```

- The concept of keys and locks
- Memory locations are tagged by adding **four bits** of metadata to each **16** bytes of physical memory

Analysis of ARM MTE



```
1: char *ptr = new char[16];
```



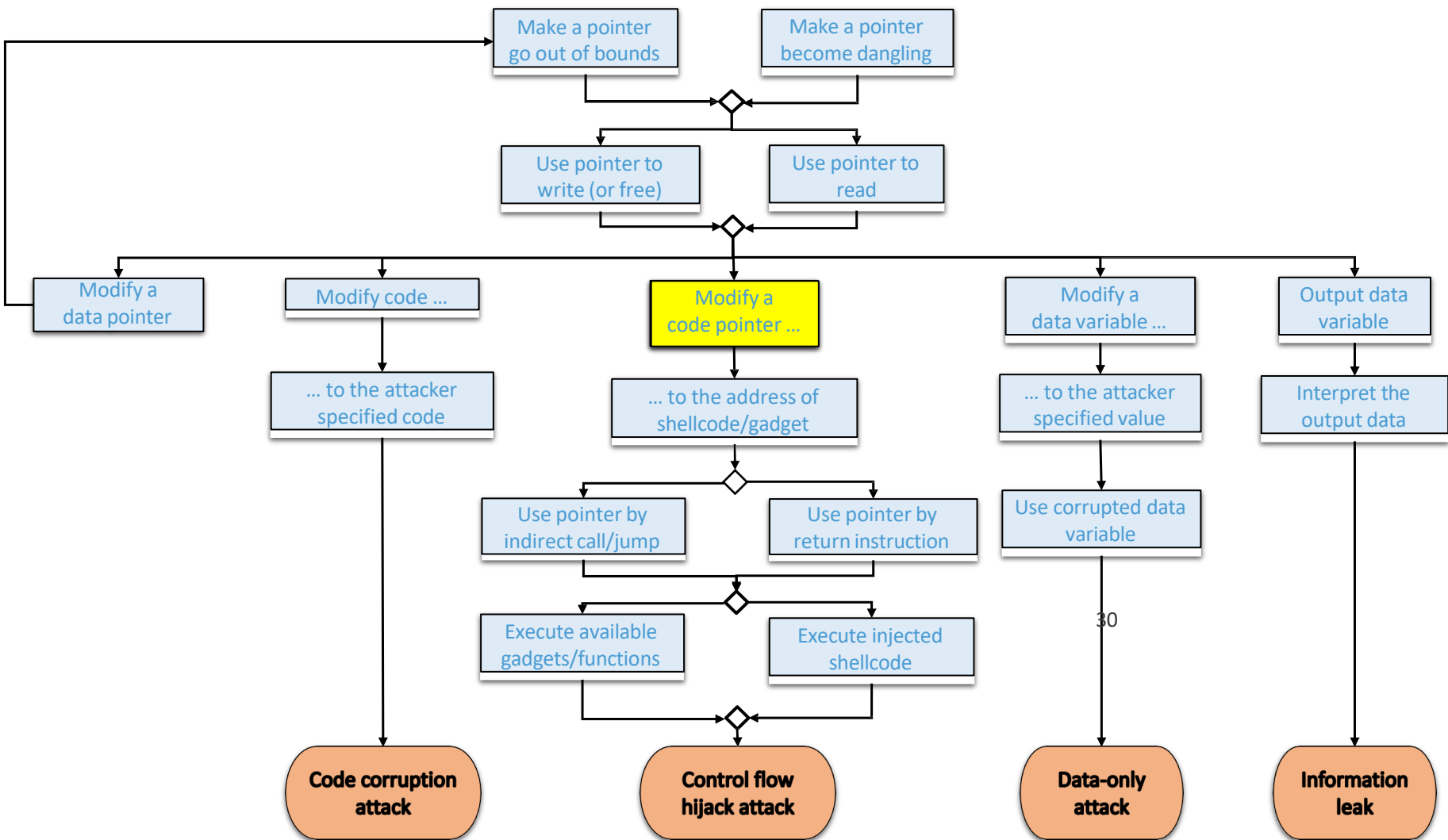
```
2: ptr[17] = 42;
```

```
3: delete [] ptr;
```

- Where to store tags (key and lock)?
 - Pointer tag is stored in top 4 unused bits inside the pointer (no extra register needed)
 - Physical memory tag is stored in hardware (new hardware needed for both DRAM and cache)
- Limited tag bits
 - Cannot ensure two allocations have different colors
 - But can ensure that the tags of sequential allocations are always different

Analysis of ARM MTE

- **Security:**
 - - Coarse-grained spatial safety. Non-sequential violation is detected probabilistically
 - + Can support temporal safety similar to spatial safety
- **Performance and other overhead:**
 - + Storage overhead is ok
 - 4 bits per 16 bytes
 - + Performance overhead is low, mostly lies in the allocation and free time, since need to modify tags in bulk
- **Compatibility:**
 - + To protect heap, modify libraries to do malloc and free; modify OS to trap on invalid pointer. No extensive code rewritten needed.



Control-flow Integrity

- To maintain code pointer integrity
- Naive idea:
 - Make pointer immutable (read-only)
 - Only work for global offset table
- How about other pointers?
 - Return address?
 - Programmer-defined function pointers

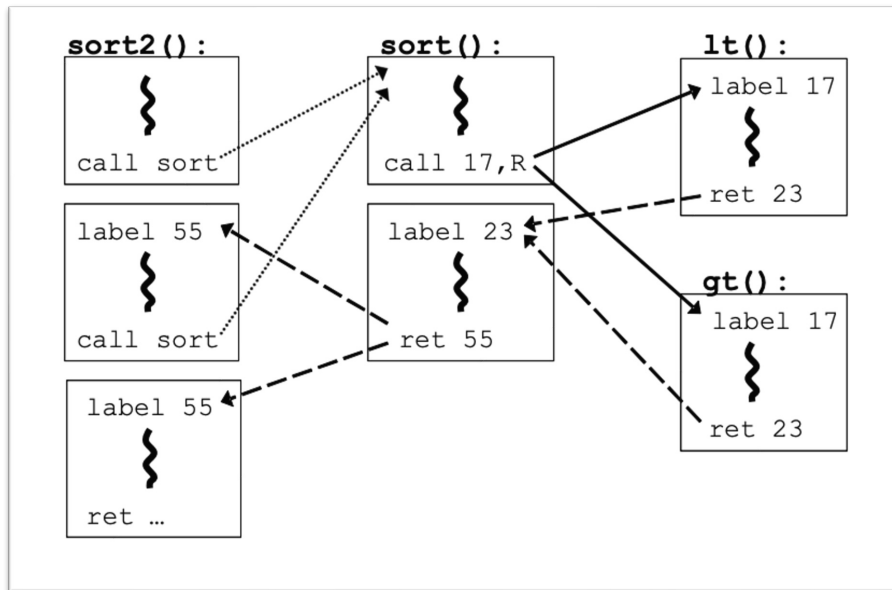
Control Flow Integrity (CFI)

```
bool lt(int x, int y) {
    return x < y;
}

bool gt(int x, int y) {
    return x > y;
}

sort2(int a[], int b[], int len)
{
    sort( a, len, lt );
    sort( b, len, gt );
}

sort(int x[], int len, fun_ptr)
{
    for(int i=0; ...)
        for (int j=i; ...)
            if (fun_ptr(x[i], x[j]))
                ... //swap x[i] and x[j]
}
```



Control-Flow Integrity Principles, Implementations, and Applications;
Martín Abadi, et al. CCS'05

Intel® Control-Flow Enforcement Technology (Intel CET)

INTEL
CET

=

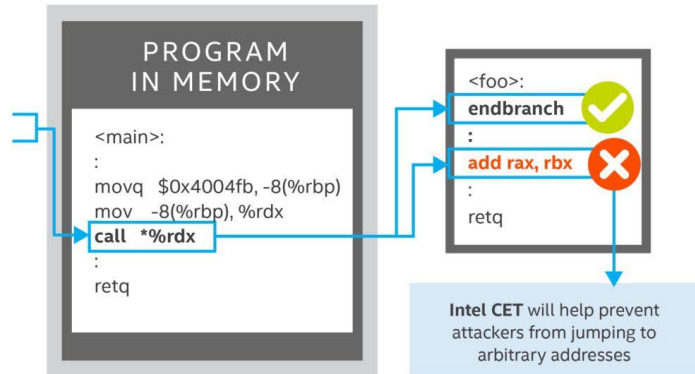
INDIRECT BRANCH
TRACKING (IBT)

+

SHADOW
STACK (SS)

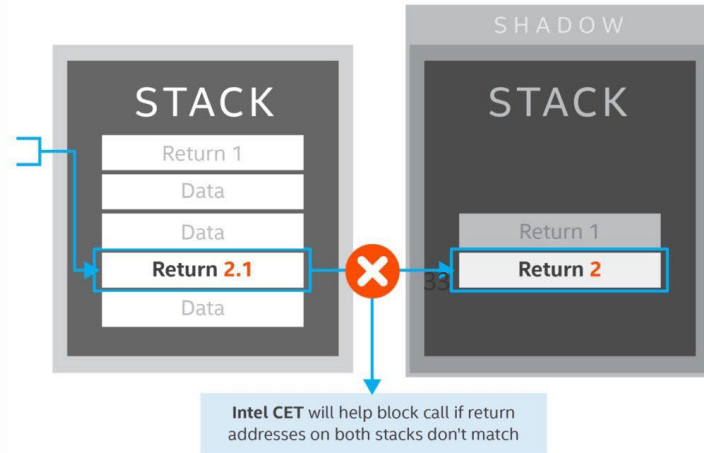
INDIRECT BRANCH TRACKING (IBT)

IBT delivers indirect branch protection to defend against jump/call oriented programming (JOP/COP) attack methods.



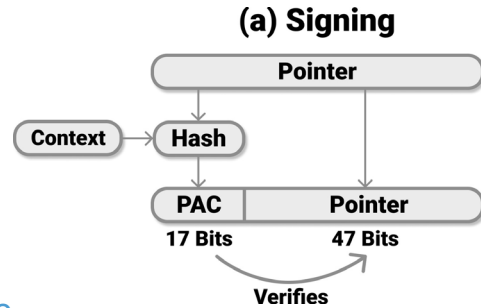
SHADOW STACK (SS)

SS delivers return address protection to defend against return-oriented programming (ROP) attack methods.



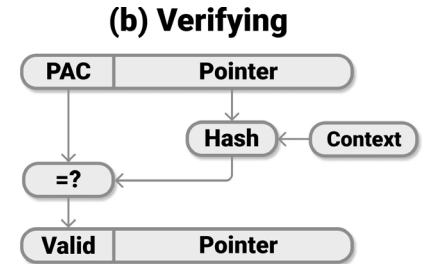
ARM PA (Pointer Authentication)

- Introduced in 2017, widely used in Apple processors
- 64-bit pointer, but 48-bit virtual address space
 - Unused high bits
- Hash:
 - A tweakable message authentication code (MAC)
 - ARM calls it **PAC (pointer authentication code)**
- Context:
 - secret key
 - salt (could be the stack pointer)



Function prologue

```
1 pacia lr, sp
2 sub sp, sp, #0x40
3 str lr, [sp, #0x30]
4 ...
```

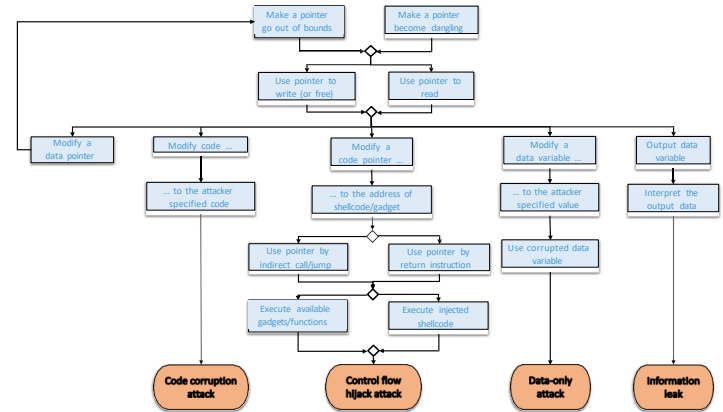


Function epilogue

```
1 ldr lr, [sp, #0x30]
2 add sp, sp, #0x40
3 autia lr, sp
4 ret
```

Summary

- Memory corruption problems: An eternal war
- Attack variations and mitigations
- Trade-offs in hardware support widely used on real systems



What is Errata?



8th and 9th Generation Intel® Core™ Processor Family

Specification Update

Supporting 8th Generation Intel® Core™ Processor Families for S/H/U Platforms, formerly known as Coffee Lake

Supporting 9th Generation Intel® Core™ Processor Families Processors for S/H Platforms, formerly known as Coffee Lake Refresh

November 2019

Revision 002

It is a compilation of device and document **errata** and **specification clarifications and changes**, which is intended for hardware system manufacturers and for software developers of applications, operating system, and tools.

Errata are **design defects or errors**. Errata may cause the processor's behavior to **deviate from published specifications**. Hardware and software designed to be used with any given stepping must assume that all errata documented for that stepping are present on all devices.

Errata Table Example

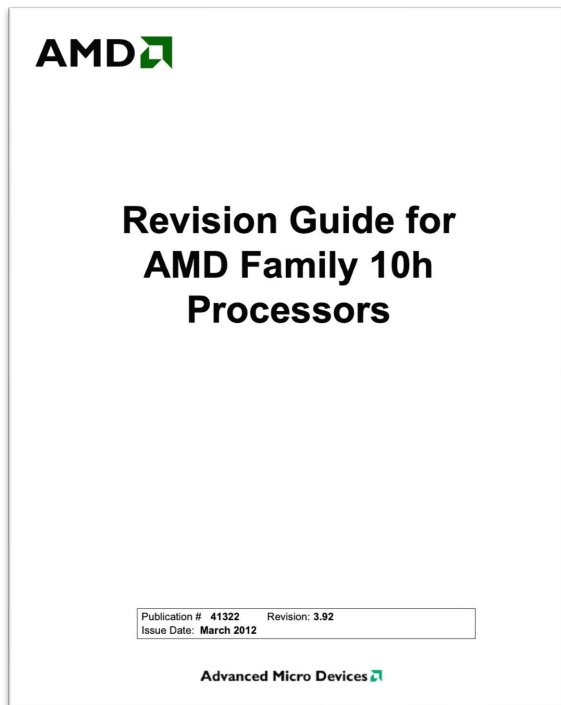
3.2 Errata Summary Information

Table 4-3. Errata Summary Table

ID	Processor Line / Stepping							Title
	S				H		U	
	B0 42	U0 62	P0 82	R0 82	U0 62	R0 82	D0 43e	
001	No Fix	No Fix	No Fix					Reported Memory Type May Not Be Used to
002	No Fix	No Fix	No Fix					<p>001</p> <p>Reported Memory Type May Not Be Used to Access the VMCS and Referenced Data Structures</p> <p>Problem</p> <p>Bits 53:50 of the IA32_VMX_BASIC MSR report the memory type that the processor uses to access the VMCS and data structures referenced by pointers in the VMCS. Due to this erratum, a VMX access to the VMCS or referenced data structures will instead use the memory type that the memory-type range registers (MTRRs) specify for the physical address of the access.</p> <p>Implication</p> <p>Bits 53:50 of the IA32_VMX_BASIC MSR report that the write-back (WB) memory type will be used, but the processor may use a different memory type.</p> <p>Workaround</p> <p>Software should ensure that the VMCS and referenced data structures are located at physical addresses that are mapped to WB memory type by the MTRRs.</p> <p>Status</p> <p>For the steppings affected, refer the Summary Table of Changes.</p>
003	No Fix	No Fix	No Fix					
004	No Fix	No Fix	No Fix					

More Errata

Occasionally, AMD identifies product errata that cause the processor to deviate from published specifications. Descriptions of identified product errata are designed to assist system and software designers in using the processors described in this revision guide. This revision guide may be updated periodically.



298 L2 Eviction May Occur During Processor Operation To Set Accessed or Dirty Bit

Description

The processor operation to change the accessed or dirty bits of a page translation table entry in the L2 from 0b to 1b may not be atomic. A small window of time exists where other cached operations may cause the stale page translation table entry to be installed in the L3 before the modified copy is returned to the L2.

In addition, if a probe for this cache line occurs during this window of time, the processor may not set the accessed or dirty bit and may corrupt data for an unrelated cached operation.

Potential Effect on System

One or more of the following events may occur:

- Machine check for an L3 protocol error. The MC4 status register (MSR0000_0410) is B2000000_000B0C0Fh or BA000000_000B0C0Fh. The MC4 address register (MSR0000_0412) is 26h.
- Loss of coherency on a cache line containing a page translation table entry.
- Data corruption.

Suggested Workaround

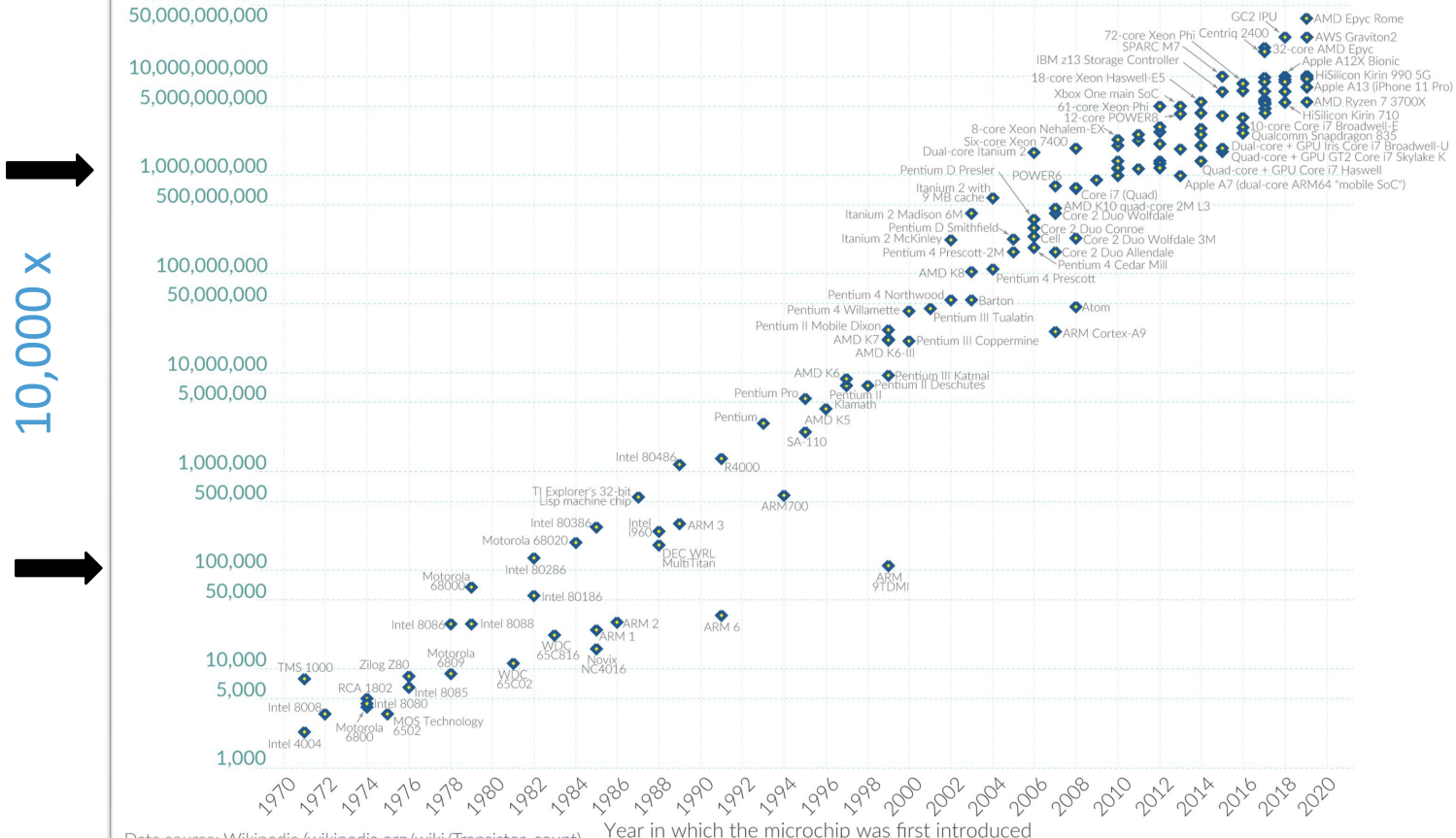
BIOS should set MSRC001_0015[3] (HWCR[TlbCacheDis]) to 1b and MSRC001_1023[1] to 1b. 4

In a multiprocessor platform, the workaround above should be applied to all processors regardless of

Moore's Law: The number of transistors on microchips doubles every two years

Moore's law describes the empirical regularity that the number of transistors on integrated circuits doubles approximately every two years. This advancement is important for other aspects of technological progress in computing – such as processing speed or the price of computers.

Transistor count

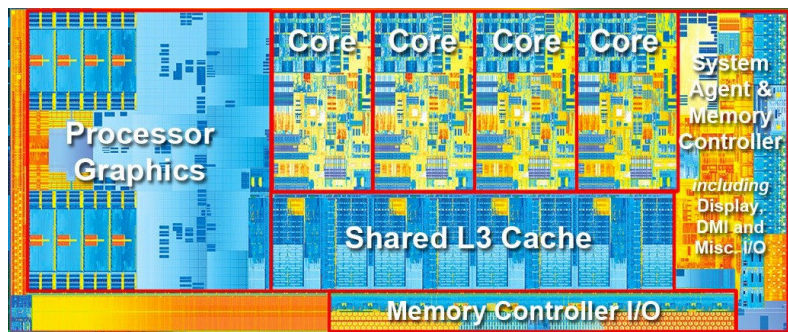


Data source: Wikipedia (wikipedia.org/wiki/Transistor_count)

OurWorldinData.org – Research and data to make progress against the world's largest problems.

Licensed under CC-BY by the authors Hannah Ritchie and Max Roser.

Errata Statistics



The Core-i7 processor with integrated graphics card
in 2012 with 1,400M Transistors

4 years; 136 errata; 3 bugs/month

A **4-fold increase** in bugs in Intel processor designs
per generation. Approximately 8000 bugs designed
into the Pentium 4 ('Willamette')

from <https://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~jrh13/slides/nijmegen-21jun02/slides.pdf>

SPECS: A Lightweight Runtime Mechanism for Protecting Software from Security-Critical Processor Bugs; Hicks et al; ASPLOS'15
<https://github.com/impedimentToProgress/specs>

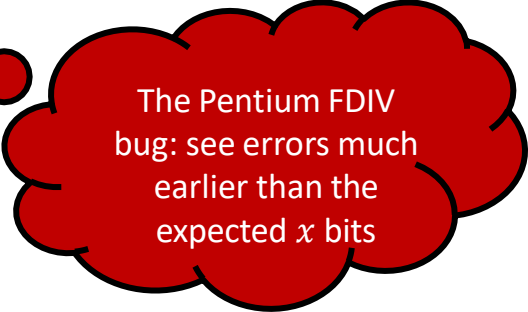
Outline

- Hardware Bug Examples
 - What do they look like? The discovery process? Impact?
 - #1: The famous Pentium FDIV bug
 - #2: SYSRET 64-bit OS privilege escalation vulnerability on Intel CPU
 - #3: Branch history injection attack
- How to discover hardware bugs?
 - Manual efforts, testing
 - Fuzzing

Bug #1: Pentium FDIV Bug

- What is the specification for floating-point computation?
 - Floating is encoded as $(1 + f) \times 2^e$, $0 \leq f < 1, e \in \mathbb{Z}$
 - Example: $1/10 = 1.9999 \dots 9a \times 2^{-4}$ (in hexadecimal)
 - We always have errors when doing floating-point computation, because we have limited number of bits for each floating number
- The specification allows error to occur after bit x

	Single precision	Double precision	Extended precision
Word size in bits	32	64	80
Bits for f	23	52	63
Bits for e	8	11	15
Relative accuracy	$2^{-23} \approx 1.2 \cdot 10^{-7}$	$2^{-52} \approx 2.2 \cdot 10^{-16}$	$2^{-63} \approx 1.1 \cdot 10^{-19}$
Approximate range	$2^{\pm 127} \approx 10^{\pm 38}$	$2^{\pm 1023} \approx 10^{\pm 308}$	$2^{\pm 16383} \approx 10^{\pm 4964}$



The Pentium FDIV bug: see errors much earlier than the expected x bits

The Discovery Process #1: Nicely's Prime

- Thomas Nicely, a mathematics professor, tried to compute reciprocal of prime numbers: $p = 824,633,702,441$
- The correct result:

$$1/p = 1.212659629408667 \times 10^{-12}$$

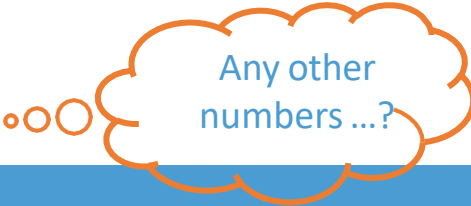
- But the new Pentium processor gave:

$$1/p = 1.212659624891158 \times 10^{-12}$$

- Took him four months to confirm the problem was NOT in his program -> math libraries -> compilers -> operating system, but in the hardware



Differ after the 9th digit



Any other numbers ...?

The Discovery Process #2: Kaiser's List

- Andreas Kaiser, a computer consultant
 - Generate *25 billion* random integers and checked the accuracy of the computed reciprocals. *23* are incorrect.

```
3221224323 = 1.7ffff70600000 . 231
12884897291 = 1.7ffff70580000 . 233
206158356633 = 1.7ffff704c8000 . 237
824633702441 = 1.7ffff7052000 . 239
1443107810341 = 1.4fffedac25000 . 240
6597069619549 = 1.7ffff7057400 . 242
9895574626641 = 1.1fffc6bc2a200 . 243
13194134824767 = 1.7ffff704e7e00 . 243
26388269649885 = 1.7ffff704fdd00 . 244
52776539295213 = 1.7ffff7046f680 . 245
```

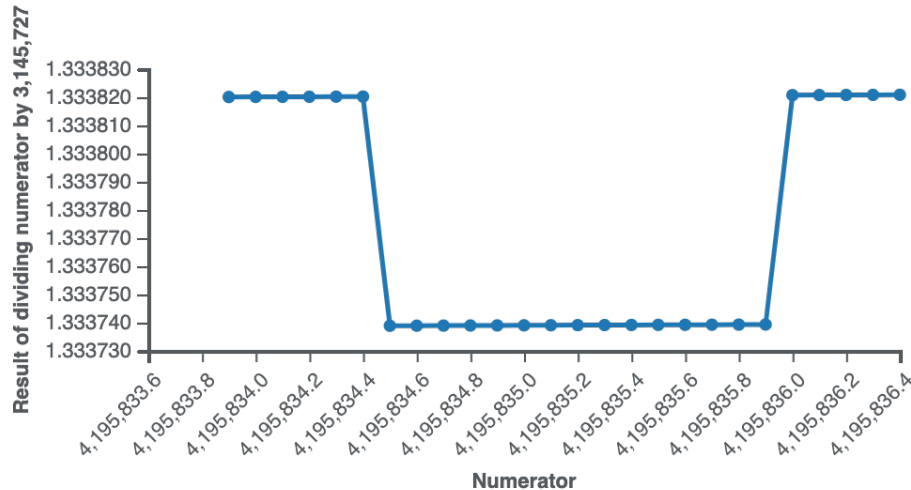
Patterns?

- Many start with *1.7ffff*
- In another word, the first 20 bits after the leading bit have to be a single zero, followed by at least 19 ones

The Discovery Process #3: Coe's Ratio

- Tim Coe, electrical engineer, had designed floating-point chips

$$\bullet \frac{4,195,835}{3,145,727} = 1.33382044 \dots \text{(correct)} \quad 1.33373906 \dots \text{(Pentium)}$$



The errors involve y/x where x and y 's **bit patterns conspire** to excite the bug at an early stage in the division.

Bug Explanation: FDIV

- Shift-and-subtract

```
          1.333?
3145727 | 4195835
          3145727
          -----
          10501080
           9437181
           -----
           10638990
            9437181
            -----
            12018090
             9437181
             -----
             25809090
              ????????
```

How do we
choose the
quotient as a
human being?

- Fast algorithm: Sweeney, Robertson, and Tocher (SRT) algorithm Radix-4:
 - Choose quotient from 0, +1, -1, +2, -2;
 - If the current quotient is incorrectly chosen, we can recover it from the next iteration
 - Guess the quotient based on the first few digits => use a 2D table to lookup

A combination of trial and error,
experience, pattern matching and luck.

How Frequently the bug can be triggered?

- Intel: an average spreadsheet user could encounter this flaw **once in every 27,000 years**, assuming 1,000 divisions per day.
- IBM: suspended sales of Pentium-based models and said it is as many as **20 mistakes per day**.
- Who actually got affected?
 - Normal users?
 - Post quantum crypto?
 - Wall street? Financial prediction programs? Did the Pentium bug flip a trading decision from buy to hold to sell?
 - Difficult to calibrate

Consequences/Impacts

- Intel's bad responses
 - Conditional replacement (customers need to claim they do get influenced by the bug) → disastrous press
 - No-questions-asked replacement → \$475M cost in 1994, 10% replacements
- Potential long-term impact:
 - Random test may not be a good idea. Exhaustive testing has a scalability problem.
 - A marked increase in the use of formal verification and number theory in hardware design

Some humor for you:

Q: How many Pentium designers does it take to screw in a light bulb?

A: 1.99904274017, but that's close enough for non-technical people.

Q: What do you get when you cross a Pentium PC with a research grant?

A: A mad scientist.

Do you think it bothers x86 users that the 486 is a functional upgrade to the Pentium?

In response to the Pentium bug, PowerMac officials have announced that they will be adding the control panel "Pentium Switcher" that allows users to decide whether the PowerMac should emulate pre-Pentium or post-Pentium FDIV behaviour.

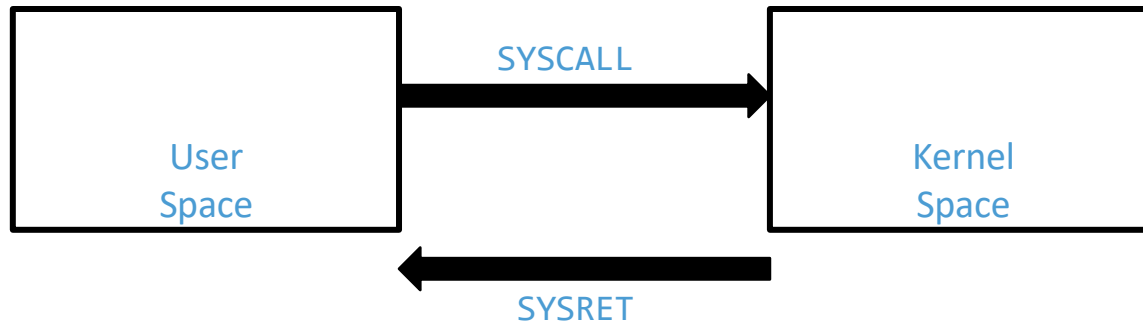
TOP TEN NEW INTEL SLOGANS FOR THE PENTIUM

9.9999973251 It's a FLAW, Dammit, not a Bug
8.9999163362 It's Close Enough, We Say So
7.9999414610 Nearly 300 Correct Opcodes
6.9999831538 You Don't Need to Know What's Inside
5.9999835137 Redefining the PC--and Mathematics As Well
4.9999999021 We Fixed It, Really
3.9998245917 Division Considered Harmful
2.9991523619 Why Do You Think They Call It *Floating* Point?
1.9999103517 We're Looking for a Few Good Flaws
0.9999999998 The Errata Inside

<http://davefaq.com/Opinions/Stupid/Pentium.html#glitch>

Bug #2: A SYSRET Bug

64-bit x86 instruction set: AMD64, Intel 64



SYSCALL

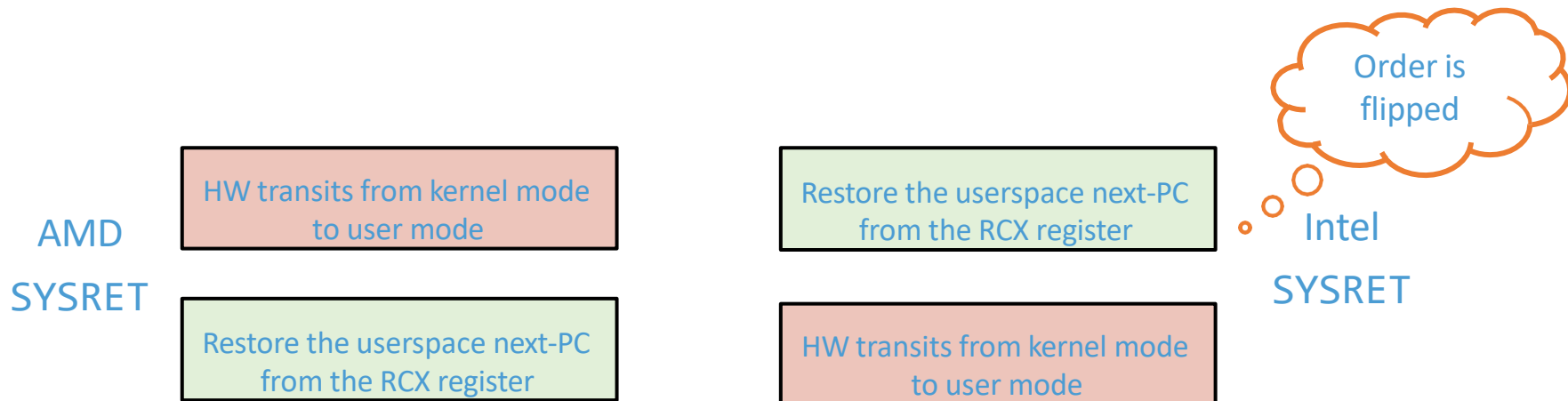
- HW transits from user mode to kernel mode
- Save the userspace next-PC to the RCX register
- Jump to a kernel syscall entry point

SYSRET

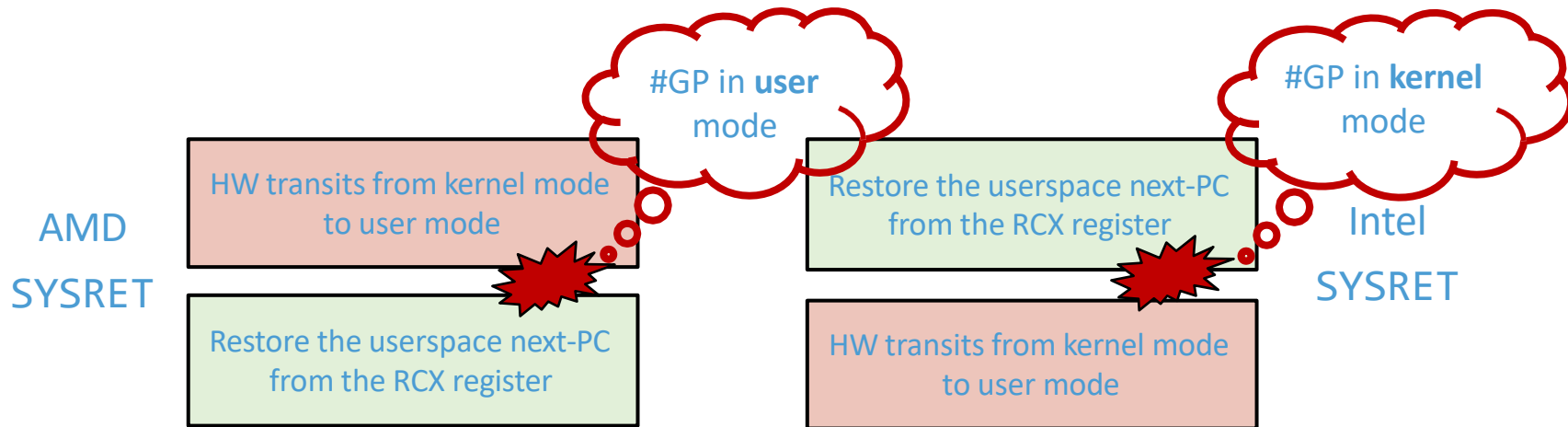
- HW transits from kernel mode to user mode
- Restore the userspace next-PC from the RCX register

A Stitch In Time Saves Nine: A Case Of Multiple OS Vulnerability; Rafal Wojtczuk; BlackHat, 2012 Model Checking to Find Vulnerabilities in an Instruction Set Architecture; Bradfield et al; HOST'16

Two Different Specifications for SYSRET



SYSRET Vulnerability



If RCX holds a non-canonical address, the SYSRET will generate a #GP (general protection fault). Canonical means that given 48-bit virtual address space, the high 16 bits (bits 63-48) of a virtual address have the same value as bit 47.

How SYSRET is used in kernel code?

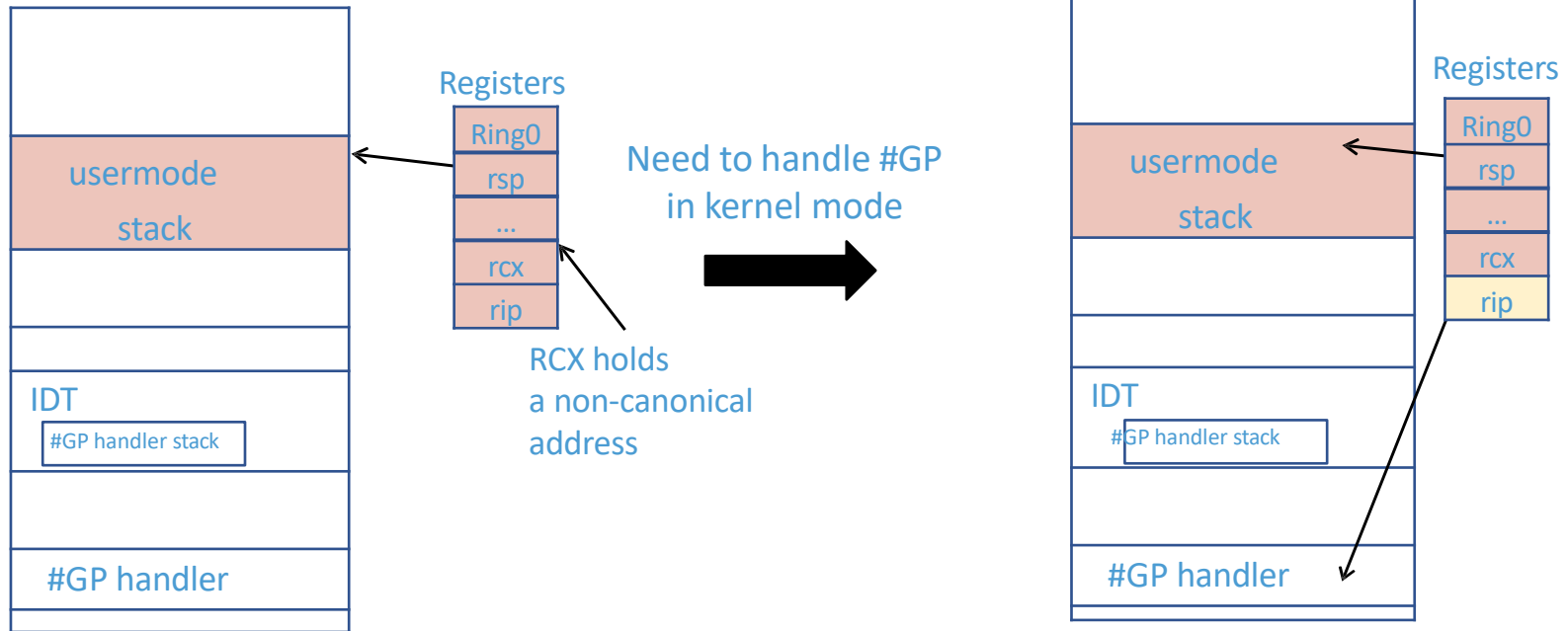
- What do we do before we transition from kernelspace to userspace?

At this point,
all the registers are
user-controlled
(attacker-controlled)

```
movq RCX(%rsp), %rcx  
movq RIP(%rsp), %r11  
cmpq %rcx, %r11 /* SYSRET requires RCX == RIP */  
jne swaps_restore_regs_and_return_to_usermode
```

```
...  
/* populate all the registers using data from userstack */  
sysret
```

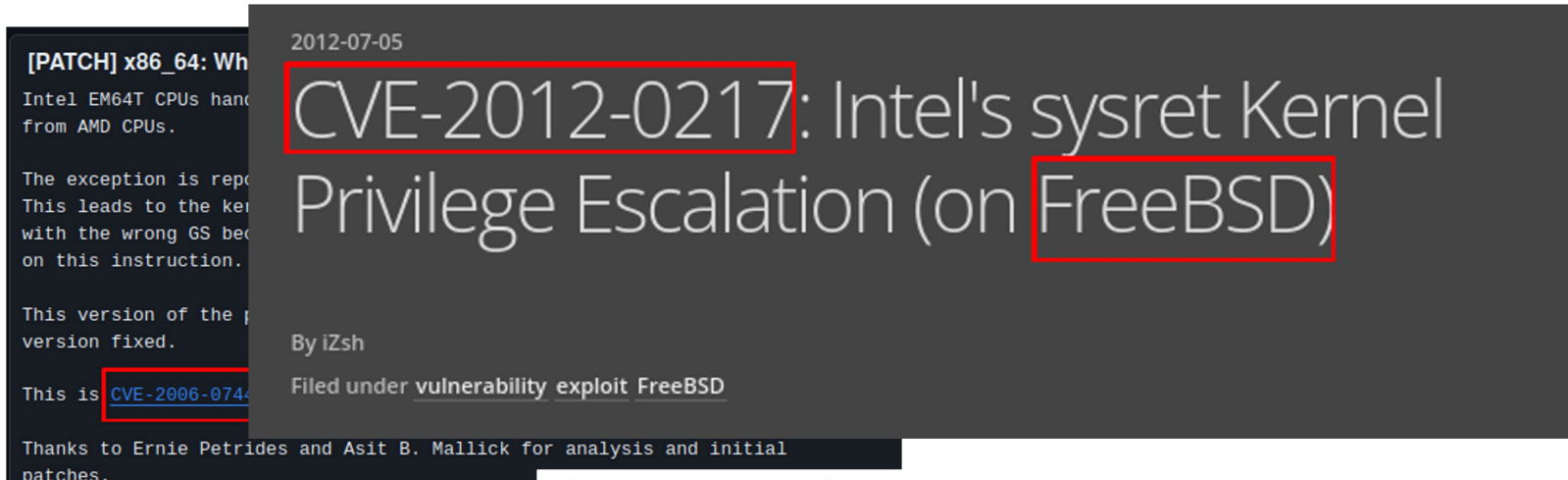
SYSRET Attack on Intel Processors



Before executing SYSRET, all registers have been restored using usermode context

Assume rip points to kernel stack and start using it --> can **overwrite kernel data**

Longtime Intel x86 OS Bug



2012-07-05

CVE-2012-0217: Intel's sysret Kernel Privilege Escalation (on FreeBSD)

By iZsh

Filed under [vulnerability exploit FreeBSD](#)

[PATCH] x86_64: Wh
Intel EM64T CPUs han
from AMD CPUs.
The exception is rep
This leads to the ke
with the wrong GS be
on this instruction.
This version of the p
version fixed.
This is [CVE-2006-074](#)
Thanks to Ernie Petrides and Asit B. Mallick for analysis and initial patches.

CVE-2012-0217 Detail

MODIFIED

This vulnerability has been modified since it was last analyzed by the NVD. It is awaiting real changes to the information provided.

Description

The x86-64 kernel system-call functionality in [Xen 4.1.2 and earlier](#), as used in Citrix XenServe. [Oracle Solaris 11 and earlier](#); illumos before r13724; Joyent SmartOS before 20120614T184600Z; FreeBSD before 9.0-RELEASE-p3; NetBSD 6.0 Beta and earlier; Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 and R2 SP1 and Windows 7 Gold and SP1; and possibly other operating systems, when running on an Intel processor, incorrectly uses the sysret path in cases where a certain address is not a

CVE-2014-4699: Linux Kernel ptrace/sysret vulnerability analysis

by Vitaly Nikolenko

🕒 Posted on July 21, 2014 at 6:52PM

It's not a bug, it's a feature

Description

SYSRET is a companion in code at privilege level 3. If its operand size is 64-bit, SYSRET remains in 64-bit mode. If its operand size is 32-bit, the registers are loaded.

Operation

```
IF (CS.L ≠ 1) or (IA32_EFER.LMA ≠ 1) or (IA32_EFER.SCE ≠ 1)
(* Not in 64-Bit Mode or SYSCALL/SYSRET not enabled in IA32_EFER *)
  THEN #UD; FI;
IF (CPL ≠ 0) THEN #GP(0); FI;

IF (operand size is 64-bit)
  THEN (* Return to 64-Bit Mode *)
    IF (RCX is not canonical) THEN #GP(0);
    RIP := RCX;
  ELSE (* Return to Compatibility Mode *)
    RIP := ECX;

FI;
RFLAGS := (R11 & 3C7FD7H) | 2;          (* Clear RF, VM, reserved bits; set bit 1 *)

IF (operand size is 64-bit)
  THEN CS.Selector := IA32_STAR[63:48]+16;
  ELSE CS.Selector := IA32_STAR[63:48];

FI;
CS.Selector := CS.Selector OR 3;        (* RPL forced to 3 *)
(* Set rest of CS to a fixed value *)
CS.Base := 0;                          (* Flat segment *)
CS.Limit := FFFFFFFH;                  (* With 4-KByte granularity, implies a 4-GByte limit *)
CS.Type := 11;                         (* Execute/read code, accessed *)
CS.S := 1;
CS.DPL := 3;
CS.P := 1;
IF (operand size is 64-bit)
  THEN (* Return to 64-Bit Mode *)
```

item-call handler to user level. With a 64-bit operand size, the low 32 bits of the register are zeroed.

It's not a bug, it's a feature

Intel claims that this vulnerability is a software implementation issue, as their processors are functioning as per their documented specifications. However, software that fails to take the Intel-specific SYSRET behavior into account may be vulnerable.

<https://www.kb.cert.org/vuls/id/649219>

Who to blame?

- Intel claims it is not an errata
 - *Errata are design defects or errors that may cause ... behavior to deviate from published specifications.*
 - This behavior is consistent with Intel's specification
 - **So the problem is the specification is incorrect**
- Intel SDM (software development manual) 3400 pages. We cannot assume the specification is always correct.
- Research question: how can we know the ISA specification is correct?
 - Some research efforts to verify ISA specification

Bug #3: eIBRS Vulnerability

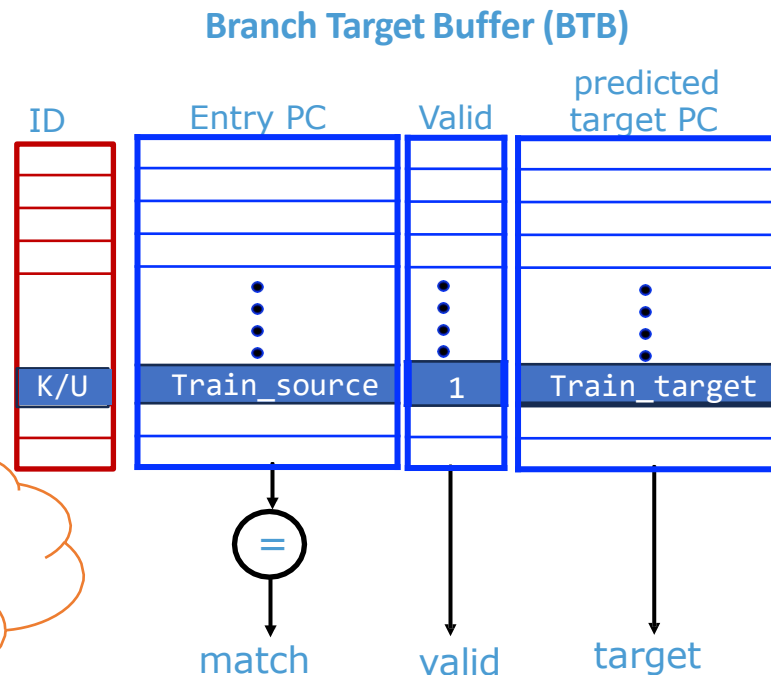
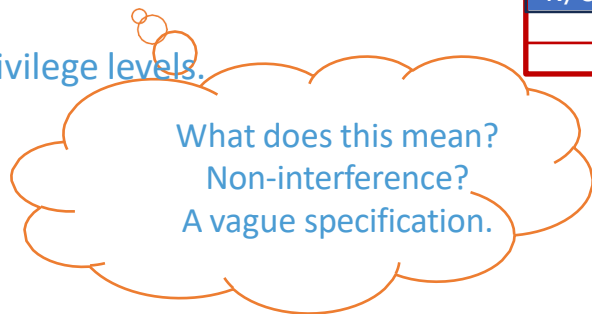
- Recap Spectre v2
- eIBRS: Enhanced Indirect Branch Restricted Speculation. Advertised as a mitigation against Spectre v2.

Specification:

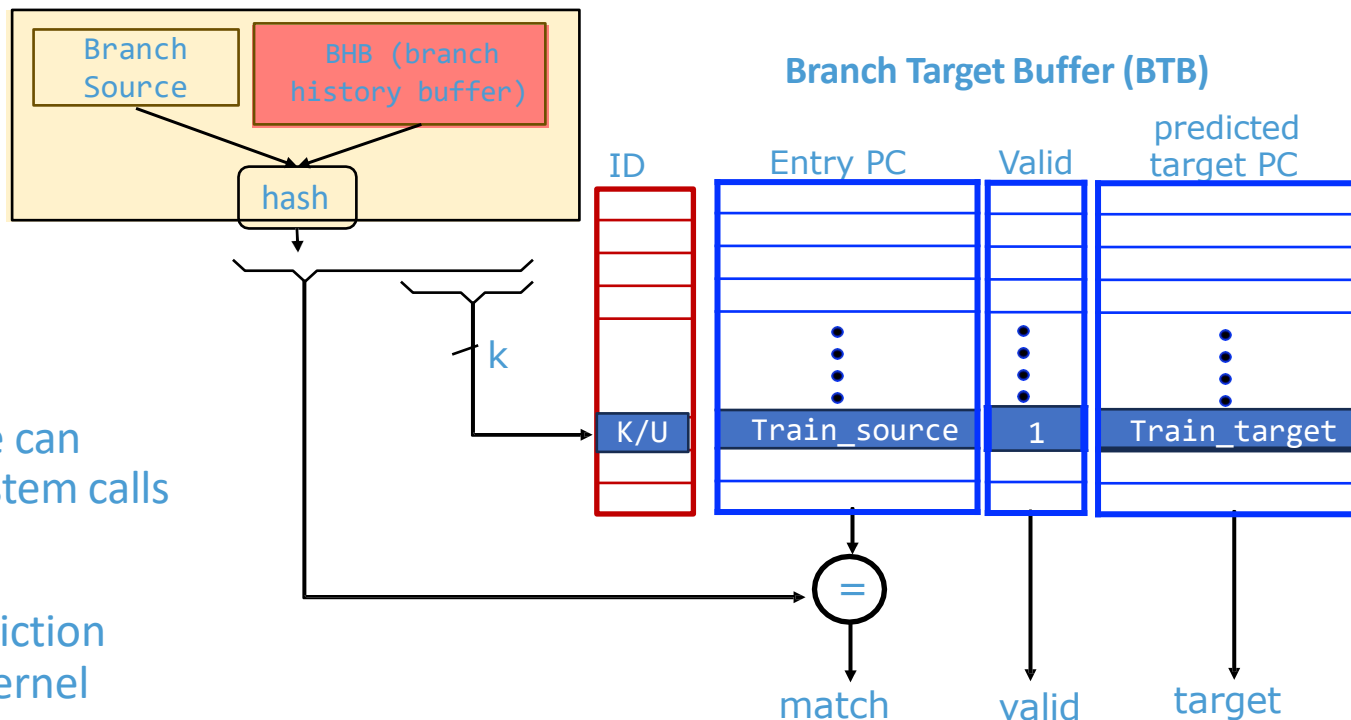
Do not let lower-privileged code interfere with the branch prediction target of the high-privilege code.

OR

Isolate BTB entries across privilege levels.

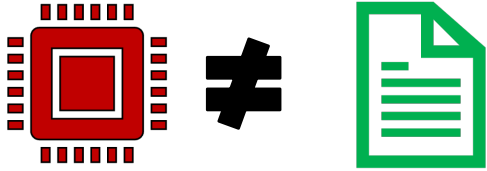


Recap the Problem: Branch History Injection



- #1: Userspace code can trigger different system calls
- #2: Userspace prediction history can affect kernel space BTB prediction

Summary



Implementation does not
match specification
(Errata)



Bugs in the specification



Vague specification

- Next: How to find hardware bugs?
 - Get ideas from the software

Software Bugs Hunting/Fixing

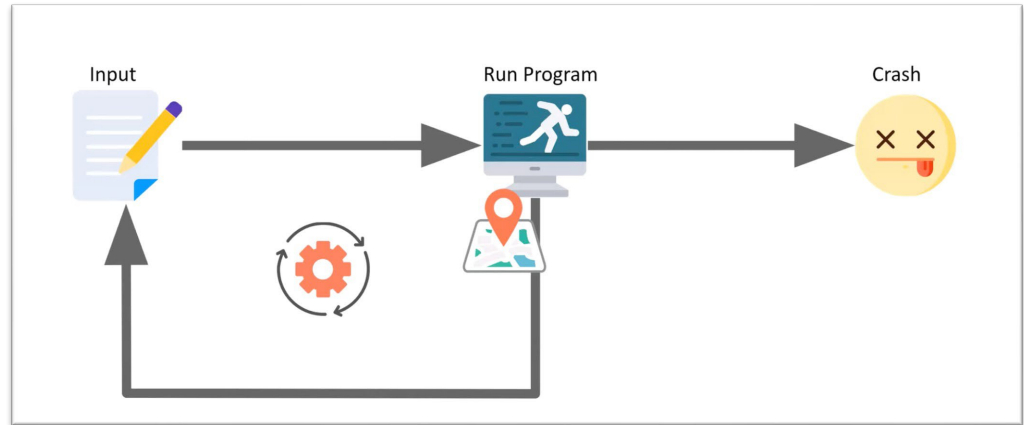
- Approach 1: Manual effort
 - Hire a lot of experts and stare at the code
 - Regression test → but need to be updated
- Approach 2: How about randomly generating test cases?
 - Fuzzing



Fuzzing

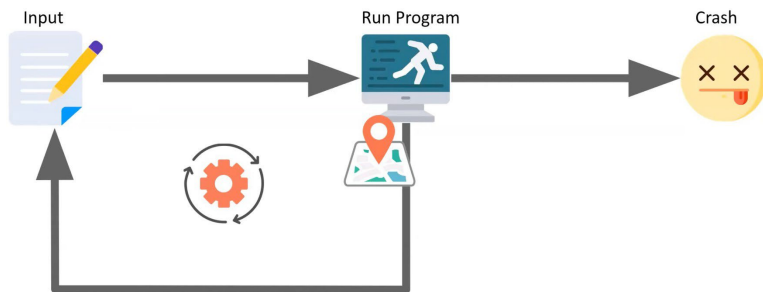
Fuzzing In A Nutshell

- Automatically generate test examples
- 1999, Alan Cox at University of Wales discovered a vulnerability in Linux kernel by simply running a program generating random input and feed into the kernel
- Simple yet effective
- Industry standard



From Riding the Fuzzing Hype Train (RAID'21 Keynote)

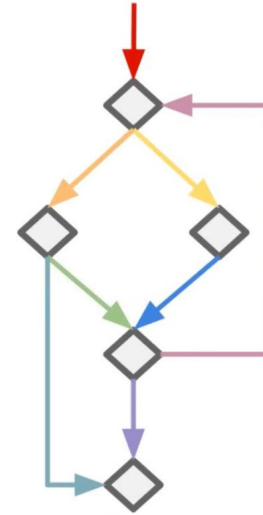
Fuzzing Components



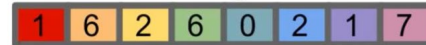
- Random seeds
 - Sometimes need formatted inputs, e.g., PDF reader
- A criteria to check whether the outcome is as expected or not.
 - Specification
 - Assertions
- Heuristics for generating new tests => feedback loop for better efficiency

Types of Fuzzing

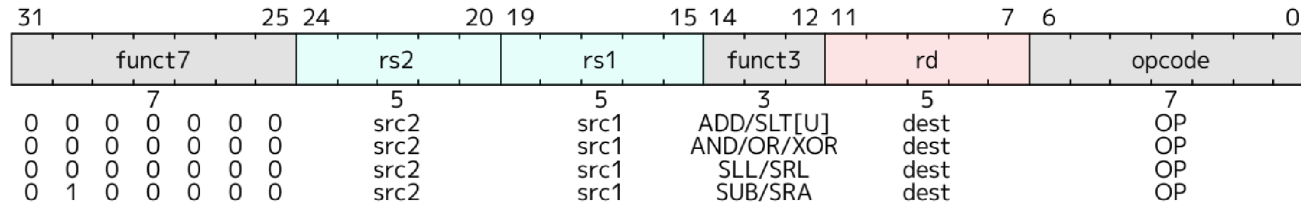
- Blackbox
- Whitebox
- Greybox



Collected coverage:



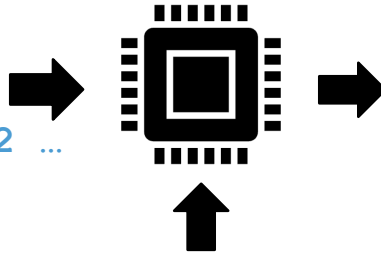
Example: Hidden Instructions



- Hidden instructions: secret instructions that give backdoor or powerful access to processor internals
- Secret processor functionality: Appendix H
- An example:
 - Pentium F00F bug, an invalid instruction freezes the cpu, discovered in 1997
 - A Ring 3 process can DOS (denial of service) a processor
 - The invalid instruction encoding is: **F0 0F C7 [C8-CF]**

Search for Hidden Instructions

Instructions:
0F 6A 60 6A 79 6D C6 02 ...

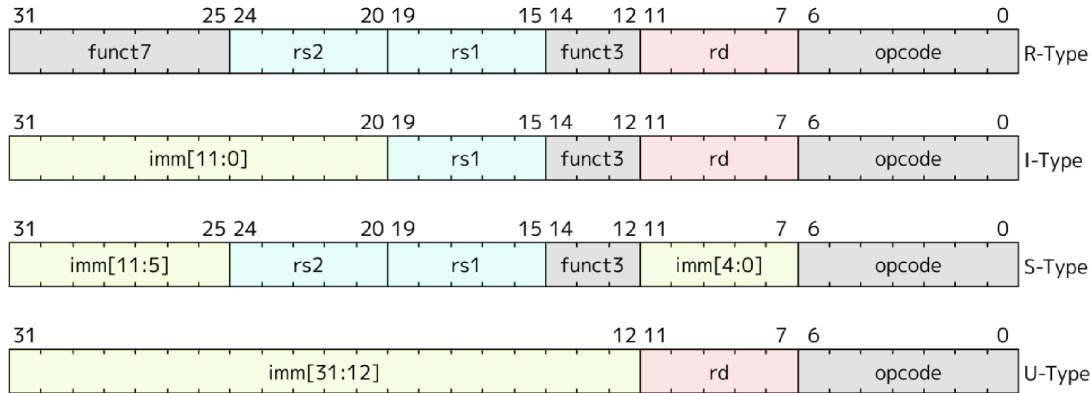


ISA specification:

Valid instructions (in spec)

Invalid instructions
(#UD exception, invalid opcode)

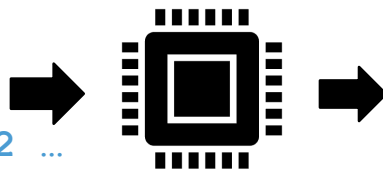
Hidden instructions (not in spec,
but can execute, no #UD exception)



Challenges #1: Detect Hidden Instruction

Instructions:

0F 6A 60 6A 79 6D C6 02 ...



Valid instructions (in spec)

Invalid instructions
(#UD exception, invalid opcode)

**Hidden instructions (not in spec,
but can execute, no #UD exception)**

How to capture
this case?

SandSifter and Findings

```
r      retf                                cd971028032c2c030e0186294c48 8
      sbb byte ptr [edi], ah             1827140c43073716c0e001700000 8
      in al, dx                          ec90101000000000000000000000 8
      les ecx, ptr [ecx]                 c4899a1as7bd34e1b7 67173530490 8
s      mov dword ptr [0x141a1726], eax   a326171a14b83a4644 841000000000 8
e      shr byte ptr [esi - 0x4fc2db6c], 0xfa c8ac94243db8fab118e07203346000 8
n      push esi                          5000000000000000000000000000 8
d      xor eax, 0xd1ae9221              352192ead18077000e78101a0e0071 4
      inc ecx                             4100000000000000000000000000 8
v: 1   adc dword ptr [esi + 0x46], 0x2884b8d1 819646d1b88428 0111100700070700 2
l: 1   jmp 0x15                             eb13000000000000000000000000 9
s: 3   jmp 0x15                             eb13000000000000000000000000 9
c: 2   push ebp                            5500000000000000000000000000 8
      stosb byte ptr es:[edi], al        aa10000000000000000000000000 8
      scasd eax, dword ptr es:[edi]     af00000000000000000000000000 8
      stosd dword ptr es:[edi], eax     ab00000000000000000000000000 8
      imul esp, dword ptr [edx + ecx*4 - 0x17], -0x75 6e648ae98bc19300021300010000 8
      insd dword ptr es:[edi], dx       6d00000000000000000000000000 8
      [unk]                             ff78468110000000000000000000 8
      xlatb                              3ed729c7ade1738edd527d4c85b8f9c0
```

318,465
71825/s
129

```
4ac585b5468388833cc036d7d1e07810
47c45b499f0ce28bbcl3ed2ca2307286
43c4683e7000e5223693dd9c8c481d86
43c44d8a1f1f8a3e0db57e00d8ad12ae
0fc68a11f53bb24d99073537aa8f523a
42c411e0880f9bc55b44178cad79c1d7
8f1ffcho82ef98aee7d6d9dbd296713
0fc614c1a86d8d48e10d91192f5136d
0fc72c07a7ca982e2f5e98742c28d5e3
45c2173888864464fd341873dfc134ae
```

- Hidden instructions across Intel and AMD processors
- Hardware errata, something like FOOF

More Hardware Fuzzing Examples

- Zenbleed: found a CPU bug via post-silicon fuzzing

```
movnti [rbp+0x0],ebx
```

```
rcr dh,1
```

```
sub r10, rax
```

```
rol rbx, cl
```

```
xor edi,[rbp-0x57]
```

```
movnti [rbp+0x0],ebx
```

```
sfence
```

```
rcr dh,1
```

```
lfence
```

```
sub r10, rax
```

```
mfence
```

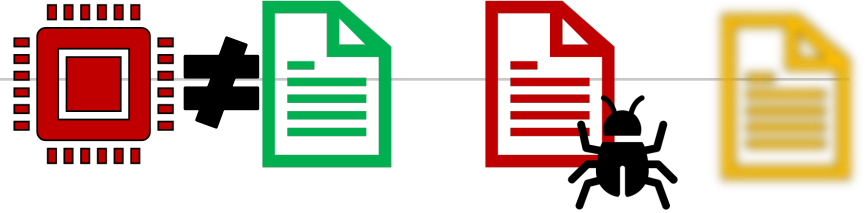
```
rol rbx, cl
```

```
nop
```

```
xor edi,[rbp-0x57]
```

A randomly generated sequence of instructions, and the same sequence but with randomized alignment, serialization and speculation fences added.

Summary



- Hardware bugs
 - Deviate from specification (errata)
 - Incorrect and vague specifications
- Potential approaches to find hardware bugs
 - Manual analysis, testing
 - Fuzzing

Program testing can be quite effective for showing the presence of bugs, but is hopelessly inadequate for showing their absence.
–Edsger Dijkstra



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL